

MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

AGENCY BASED FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) is developing a new Regional Transportation Plan for the MAG region. As part of this effort, MAG conducted a series of focus groups to identify and document transportation issues and concerns. The focus groups were held throughout the Valley to capture ideas from geographically and ethnically diverse groups of participants. The findings will assist MAG in identifying regional values, goals, and objectives that will guide the development of the Regional Transportation Plan.

The format of the Focus Groups included an opportunity for interactive discussion among participants, as well as a voting exercise that provided insight on priorities. To help structure the process, the discussions were organized into five topics areas. The topics included:

- ✕ Demographic and Social Change;
- ✕ The New Economy;
- ✕ Environmental and Resource Issues;
- ✕ Land Use and Urban Development; and
- ✕ Transportation and Technology.

Participants were encouraged to provide their own issues and concerns that related to each topic, both individually and in a round-table discussion. The responses received were documented in essentially a “verbatim” format so that the message intended by the participant was accurately conveyed.



The results of the **Agency Based Focus Group** are attached. This material has been divided into three parts as follows:

Part I. Key Focus Group Issues: In Part I, the key issues identified at the Agency Based Focus Group are listed by topic area. These issues are those voted by the participants to be the top two concerns in each topic area. Due to ties, certain topics may have more than two issues listed.

Part II. Comprehensive Listing of Participant Issues: In Part II, all the issues identified by the individual participants are listed. These issues have been grouped by topic area.

Part III. Roundtable Discussion Comments: In Part III, the results from a roundtable discussion are listed. These comments were recorded when all the focus group attendees participated in a general discussion of issues prior to voting on the top issues in each topic area.

If you have any questions or comments on the focus group process or the attached results, please contact Roger Herzog, MAG staff, at 602-254-6300 or rherzog@mag.maricopa.gov.



AGENCY BASED FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

PART I. KEY FOCUS GROUP ISSUES

The participants of the Agency Based Focus Group were given the opportunity to vote on their top two issues in each of the five topic areas. The two issues receiving the most votes are listed under each topic. Due to ties, certain topics may have more than two issues listed.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE PRIMARY ISSUES

- x Larger population of elderly in the region – new increased demands on infrastructure and services.
- x [Need to address] demographic/social impacts on transportation modes.

THE NEW ECONOMY PRIMARY ISSUES

- x The region needs to improve its educational resources so people will have the skills and knowledge sought by industry.
- x [Need to address] telecommuting impacts on work and lifestyle.
- x Meeting transportation needs of low-income workers.

ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES PRIMARY ISSUES

- x [Need to address] air quality improvements.
- x [Need to address] water supply.
- x [Need] attention to alternative energy solutions.

LAND USE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT PRIMARY ISSUES

- x Creating a sense of community [is needed].
- x Need to give people a range of housing options.
- x Approach problems/goals using multi-modes.



- ✖ Developments of regional significance and general plan amendments should be reviewed/modified from a regional perspective.



PART I. KEY FOCUS GROUP ISSUES (CONTINUED)

TRANSPORTATION AND TECHNOLOGY PRIMARY ISSUES

- x Need for regional, dedicated revenue for transit.
- x Emphasize comprehensive transportation toolbox, with a variety of options.

PART II. COMPREHENSIVE LISTING OF PARTICIPANT ISSUES

The following is a comprehensive listing of the issues that individual participants of the Agency Based Focus Group identified as their concerns under each topic.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE ISSUES

- x [Need] elderly mobility options/issues.
- x Alternative work schedules to manage transportation demand in peak periods.
- x [Need to address] telecommuting impacts.
- x [Need to address] personal mobility options and preferences.
- x Aging population will require multi-modal options for travel.
- x Better education focused on needs of minority children.
- x Inequity in income distribution leads to more affordable housing needed.
- x Affordable housing needs to be interspersed throughout community.
- x Population and employment densification with population growth.
- x [Need] affordable housing.
- x [Need to address issues of] aging baby-boomers.



- x Increased need for alternatives to driving.



DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE ISSUES (CONTINUED)

- x Need to be able to communicate in other language besides English on signs due to increases in immigration from other countries.
- x Increased demand on transit, and especially dial-a-ride, from aging senior population.
- x Healthcare facilities and transportation requirements.
- x Provide transportation services for the elderly.
- x Address impacts of "potential" total population/employment that could reside in region.
- x Increased awareness and application of Civil Rights (Title VI) and Environmental Justice.
- x Additional focus on Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- x Transportation systems must accommodate a variety of users.
- x Create developments for people to "age in place."
- x Create programs for legal and illegal immigrants.
- x Retired sector demands more public transportation but willing to pay less.
- x Retired sector demands more medical transportation.
- x Children of single-parent or dual-income households have higher unmet travel needs.
- x The need to provide affordable access. Transportation options to people of all income levels.
- x Rapid growth from new immigration brings transit-friendly attitudinal and economic preferences.
- x The minorities will soon be the majority – integration and high birth rates.
- x Polarizing society with wealth concentrated at the top and a growing underclass.
- x Aging population will mean a greater need for health services and public transportation (i.e. dial-a-ride).
- x Growth in low-paying service employment means people need to move farther out to find affordable housing.
- x People are becoming more isolated from each other (they come home from work and drive right into the garage).
- x Rapid growth has fueled a growing demand for new schools. Where will we get the teachers?



- x Minority growth gives greater opportunity for transit.
- x Education is critical for changing attitudes.



THE NEW ECONOMY ISSUES

- x The economic vitality of this region in comparison with others across the country requires a regional transportation [system] far better than what is projected from yesterday's trends and historic legacy solutions. New breakthrough regional transportation solutions are needed.
- x Technology advances will provide people with more flexibility as to where they live.
- x The need for flexible municipal zoning ordinances which allow individuals to work at home.
- x Exploration into the development of local and company-based telework centers.
- x Teleworking will substitute for work trips.
- x Education level in Valley not conducive to high paying jobs. Service jobs become predominant.
- x Workforce dispersed throughout the region – i.e. lack of a core central city.
- x Large fraction of government and business transactions via Internet/e-commerce.
- x Home office a very common feature with broadband communication connections.
- x Delivery of many services via Internet – reducing the demand for transportation from current levels.
- x Global competition trend by local industry likely to be more intense.
- x Ability of the region to grow and compete effectively will depend on the local educational infrastructure.
- x Create “zones” to foster new businesses and industries.
- x The region needs to attract and retain a highly educated workforce in order to attract and retain high-value, high-tech industries.
- x High-tech companies are looking for a range of skills that are not widely available in the Valley.
- x If the region doesn't preserve its quality of life, the residents will leave and the employers will follow.
- x The region needs to invest in upgrading its telecommunications infrastructure.
- x Rising energy costs could make the region less competitive in the future.
- x Need to make sure there is proper training/education for the changing work environment through technology.
- x Education for the information age to attract quality employment.



- x [Need to address issue of] telecommuting.



THE NEW ECONOMY ISSUES (CONTINUED)

- x [Need to address issue of] service industry, low-wage jobs.
- x Education must meet employer's needs.
- x As baby boomers retire, there will be a smaller labor pool.
- x Two-tiered society of poor and rich creates social inequity.
- x Sales tax reductions to local governments due to Internet purchases.
- x Need to market technology solutions to decrease demand for roadways and travel, i.e. telework.
- x [Need to address issue of] utility demands and supply/costs.
- x For near-term and longer-term outlook (40 years), assess potential for international air cargo demands.
- x Assess impact of potential changes from less demand for CBD commute.
- x Provide creative opportunities for trip making (i.e., computer-facilitated and trips not taken (i.e. telework.))

ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES ISSUES

- x Increased awareness of noise issues associated with various modes of transportation.
- x Land use planning density impacts on transportation.
- x [Need to address] resources sharing concepts.
- x [Need to address] land use vs. water supply.
- x Lifestyle preferences [need to be addressed].
- x [Need to address] noise pollution in urban environments.
- x [Need] advancements in alternative fuels (e.g. fuel cells).
- x [Need] healthy place[s] to live.
- x [Need to] maintain character of the desert.



- ✕ Environmental concerns and clout are on the ascendancy and we must be much more considerate of these issues than we have been in the past.



ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES ISSUES (CONTINUED)

- x [Need to regulate] water supply and use.
- x Need to regulate land uses to curb sprawl and pollution.
- x Hybrid/electric/fuel-cell-powered vehicles overcome air quality as constraint to auto travel.
- x Solar energy should be source of power and incentives in state and local laws.
- x Open space becomes more important as region continues to grow.
- x Regional governance structure needed to preserve open space!!!
- x Health impacts of bad air are greater on the elderly and children.
- x Lack of regional role in land use planning limits effectiveness of transportation solutions.
- x Evaluate potential for energy limitations to reduce future travel.
- x Determine if water resources will limit (cap) total population in region.
- x [Need to determine] availability and cost of energy.
- x Resource constraints and environmental factors will influence land use decisions.
- x Water supply and water quality will be crucial.
- x Power supply and increased demands will be challenging.
- x Need to identify long-term goals for inevitable growth in the desert.
- x Water and electricity will be the major issues.
- x Global warming [is a concern].
- x The need to strictly adhere to plans and policies that are designed to reduce air pollutants at a regional level.
- x The need for a coordinated, long range regional water supply and usage plan.
- x Improved technology will conquer most air quality problems – congestion will remain.
- x Environmental responsibility will need to be emphasized with education and marketing.



LAND USE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

- x Evaluate relative ability of parts of region to absorb growth (holding capacity vs. cost of infill vs. cost of new infrastructure).
- x Assess whether heat island effect would be worse with denser development.
- x Need to require developers to design holdings and communities oriented to efficient transit operations.
- x Failure of local governments and County Board of Supervisors to contain sprawl or encourage efficient local use.
- x [Need to develop] urban environment that people want to live in.
- x [Need to] maintain character of the desert southwest.
- x [Need to] develop multi-modal facilities.
- x Approach problems/goals using multi-modes, don't expect one mode to be answer.
- x Design development so that people don't have to travel so far – cluster common destinations.
- x Be sensitive to the local “feel” of a place as plans are developed [on] a regional basis.
- x Lack of natural limits to growth (topography, etc.) will lead to more low-density development.
- x Need a diversity of housing characters and types integrated into cohesive community.
- x Need to provide neighborhood streets that are safe and comfortable for pedestrians.
- x Need to integrate people into transportation rather than focusing on vehicles.
- x Need to preserve open space.
- x One size does not fit all, need to give people a range of housing options.
- x How do we provide transportation services to a dispersed development pattern?
- x Development is spilling over into neighboring counties. How do we coordinate planning over this growing multi-jurisdictional urban area?
- x Local communities have few incentives to think about development impacts beyond their borders.
- x Satisfying nearly all land use and urban development objectives almost everywhere will be an exercise in futility guaranteed to sub-optimize.





LAND USE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT ISSUES (CONTINUED)

- x A coherent strategic regional-scale land use plan and enforcement mechanism is needed to effectively satisfy the quality of life, economic vitality transportation service issue
- x [Need to address] urban vs. suburban densities.
- x [Need to address] land use impacts on major transportation corridors.
- x [Need to address] regional land use planning vs. each city's plan.
- x The need to revisit the concept of a true regional land use plan for the metropolitan region.
- x Communities would provide for an increase in well planned, higher density developments with close linkages to transportation and commuting options.
- x The need to actively enforce municipal zoning in an effort to maintain planned land use patterns.
- x More choices in housing types needed.
- x Good design and urban amenities needed to encourage higher densities along transit corridors.
- x Instead of trying to purchase new ROW – use existing infrastructure.
- x Limited natural barriers allow low-density development to expand.
- x Development exactions/fees should fund public transportation as well as roads.
- x Residents deserve choices in residential developments.
- x [Develop] partnerships [among communities].
- x Transportation improvement must not only respond to development, but also encourage and guide developments.
- x Need to have options with car-friendly developments and transit friendly developments.



TRANSPORTATION AND TECHNOLOGY ISSUES

- x Closer adherence to regional transportation planning.
- x Sustainability and provision for strong, well integrated multimodal transportation planning.
- x The need for localized and company-based telecommuting policies.
- x The provision of more transportation options that are accessible.
- x Governance and funding are biggest obstacles to effectively addressing multi-modal transportation needs.
- x Freeways and local streets adequately addressed; RRS deserves more attention.
- x Need innovative service for non-work trips.
- x Use flexibility of buses to meet express/rapid needs.
- x [Need to address] personal mobility options vs. public transportation.
- x [Need to address] congestion [through] demand management – pricing.
- x [Need to analyze] trucking thru vs. around urban area.
- x [Need to address] VMT increases vs. population increases.
- x [Need to address] alternatively fueled vehicles impacts on transportation revenues.
- x Pending changes in fuel technology [need to be addressed].
- x Communication technology changing how people work.
- x Need to preserve infrastructure.
- x Cost of maintaining infrastructure [needs to be addressed].
- x Need to provide people with a range of transportation options.
- x There is no one [single] transportation solution.
- x Need to use best tool in box for a given need.
- x How do we protect individual privacy in a world where all aspects of transportation are increasingly subject to monitoring.
- x With growth, citizens will demand that agencies provide higher quality of transportation services.





TRANSPORTATION AND TECHNOLOGY ISSUES (CONTINUED)

- x Public sector will need to look at technology solutions that can only be implemented through private sector partnerships.
- x Leveraging technology and information services is the key to effectively addressing the transportation requirements of the future.
The public will grow to expect ITS service and the infrastructure to deliver those services will be a minimal expectation.
- x Congestion is inevitable without regional land use planning and authority.
- x Need transportation options to single-occupant auto.
- x Need to consider human needs rather than fast auto movement in roadway design.
- x VMT has leveled off nationally. The same will occur here eventually. Need to plan, design and operate a balanced regional, multimodal transit system.
- x Mobility will decrease and travel options are limited but there is no funding source for such.
- x [Need to] develop satellite telework facilities.
- x [Need to develop] higher-capacity transit for the region.
- x As planning new freeways, include ROW for public transportation. Also include ROW for road expansions.
- x For public transportation, create many options.
- x Plan for suburb to suburb travel – not everyone wants/needs to travel to central Phoenix.
- x High-capacity transit is a transportation issue.
- x Travel from SE valley to rest of region constrained geographically/politically – need alternative.
- x Commute times in CBD will worsen with population and employment - need alternative.
- x Identify if new SOV technologies can continue to increase vehicle energy efficiently, reducing real per mile cost of travel.
- x Evaluate potential for significant new technologies in mass transit.
- x Need to coordinate transportation with land use planning.
- x Need to have a multi-modal regional transportation system.



TRANSPORTATION AND TECHNOLOGY ISSUES (CONTINUED)

- x Transportation solutions not the same for all parts of the community. Transit should be focused where it can be most effective.
- x New vehicles, work schedules, and driving habits will keep pace with increasing demand.
- x Internet will provide the information overlay for truly multi-modal systems.
- x Suburb to central city commute will disappear in 20 years.
- x Air freight and air travel [will] increase to a point requiring a second gateway airport in 10 to 20 years.

PART III. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION FINDINGS

The following are issues that were identified by participants in an informal, roundtable discussion held during the Agency Based Focus Group, regarding future transportation in the Valley.

- x Provide choices that are necessary for how people live and travel.
 - _ Types of residential density options.
 - _ Modes of transportation.
- x Mobility for people – evaluate the needs of people vs. the needs of vehicles.
 - _ Elderly – living longer.
 - _ Minorities – larger families.
- x Focus on what people get:
 - _ Purpose of trip from beginning to end.
 - _ Need a plan that looks at the entire trip (end to end), coordinate and integrate a complete travel trip.
- x Need to accommodate all people (provide the people with/what they've asked for) – review surveys.
- x Impact of technology will drive transportation needs.
- x Technology will drive where people live and how they travel.
- x Model needs to address the change in technology.



- x The commute from suburb to central city will decrease.



PART III. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION FINDINGS (CONTINUED)

- x Downtowns will continue to provide unique services.
 - _ Cultural events.
 - _ Specialty retail.
 - _ Co-depend companies.
 - _ Museum/movies, etc.
- x Plan should accommodate technology (substitute for travel).
- x Need to look at the root of the culture of the people (include their input), root of a culture/where culture originated = understand communication style for each culture or the people we are working with.
- x Energy – balance resources with growth needs.
- x New technology for energy/fuel – what will the implications of this technology be for transportation options.
- x Water required for growth (need to understand how water availability may direct growth in the future).
- x Do not see a major shift of demand away from vehicles (challenge is to find a balance with other modes).
- x County's growth is constrained by center core transportation facilities – nowhere to grow or enlarge transportation facilities within this area.
- x Need to improve transportation in the core smartly (mass transit).
- x Support modes of transportation that promote a sense of community.
- x Offer a range of transportation options (driven by economics):
 - _ Single professional urban types.
 - _ Married with kids – open space away from city (ex. Cave Creek).
- x Provide a toolbox of modes of transportation:
 - _ Not one is the solution.
 - _ All part of the solution.





PART III. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION FINDINGS (CONTINUED)

- x Need a regional dedicated transit source.
- x Aging population will increase need for Dial-a-Ride.
- x Density (good quality) may be accepted by people in the Valley.
- x Promote demand management:
 - HOV.
 - Car pool.
- x Educate community on what transportation options are available (both languages or others).
- x Need regional cooperation.
- x Mass transit is not competitive with vehicles regarding convenience and affordability.
- x Provide flexibility in transportation options.
- x Need to focus on choices and provide transportation options that a wide variety of people can use.
- x Natural resources will impact future transportation options.
- x Educate children on future transportation modes – need to move away from single occupant vehicles.
- x Air quality needs to improve (quality of life).
- x Performance measures and cost/benefits will be increased in plan.
- x Valley lacks a true regional plan. Many decisions (transportation/land use) are made at the local municipality levels without a regional concern.
- x Need to revisit municipal zoning ordinance so work at home is permitted.

